Riots-1936

Georgia

YAMACRAW RIOT

Attention was called to the fact that Thanksgiving Day was another anniversary of the Yamacraw riot in which a large number if our people were concerned, several of whom were forced to serve time for alleged participation. There was no reason whatever for this affair if the officers had only acted other than on the offensive. Clear thinking and cool headed policemen can do so much in the mantaining order and preventing the committing of offenses. It is noted at times when some of our policemen were charged with intoxication. In Atlanta, a serious charge is made against the chief of police because of intemperate language and indulging in ardent spirits. Officers with such weaknesses have no business on the force. Those in humble life have but a slight chance should they come in contact with such officers. The Yamacraw riot could have been averted, especially if the officers concerned were of the calibre of the Atlanta policeman, who said after serving on the force twenty-six years, that "I never used my pistol, and use my blackjack only once in all the years I have been an officer. All a good officer has to do is to be patient, use common sense and control his temper."

Riots-1936

Historical (Houston.)

WAR DEPARTMENT RELEASES
24TH INFANTRY "MARTYR"

Press Service N.A.A.C.P.

New York, Sept. 18.- Roy Tyler who has been confined in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas for his part in the so-called Houston riot involving members of the 24th Infantry, has had the rest of his sentence remitted, it was announced by the War Department this week. 9-18-36 new york n.y.

The warden of the penitentiary has been advised of the action of the department and it is expected that Tyler will be released at once.

Tyler is one of the last of the former 24th Infantry men for whose release the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has been carrying on a battle for so many years. There still remains in prison Stewart W. Phillips. All the other men have been paroled or pardoned. The N.A.A.C.P. is still at work on Phillips's case and is hoping that he may be released soon.

Riots- 1936

Louisiana

Opelousas, La. News
December 24, 1936

NEAR RIOT AVOIDED AT TALK-MEETING TO NEGROES

An ex-Congressman almost lost a good pair of false teeth from sheer enthusiasm and 150 colored farmers were given a smattering of high finance in one easy lesson here Friday afternoon on the Court House square as W. C. Irby, Farmer Union executive, expounded the policies and ideals of his organization.

The teeth were Mr. Irby's and but for a quick movement of the hand, they would have crashed to the ground in one of his frantic gestures. One of the negroes in the audience was taken to jail by a deputy for alleged impertinence after the talk was over.

The serio-comic meeting almost threatened to take a serious turn, however, when unidentified whites in the crowd hurled charges of "agitator" at the ex-Congressman in protest of the intimacy with which he moved among the negroes after the completion of the speech.

Blames Wall Street

Mr. Irby, who blamed Wall Street bankers for everything from the price of hogs in Alabama to that of the soiled cotton handkerchief which he waved at intervals, smiled uneasily when a St. Landry farmer buttonholed him and told him in no unhesitating terms that there were other places "far healthier for him than Opelousas." In reply to the charge that the union was meddling with the disposition of negro tenants on one farm near here, Mr. Irby replied that the affair was that of the government.

"Hoist Cotton Price"

The Union executive began his talk with a few Biblical quotations, interspersed here and there by assurances that all he and the union "stood for" were backed by the Gospel.

Pulling out a white handkerchief from his pocket, he explained to the crowd that it had cost him a nickel and at that rate a pound of cotton should sell well above a dollar. At that point a negro in the audience advanced his own handkerchief which he said cost him ten cents, whereby, by rapid mathematical deduction, Mr. Irby said cotton should sell for four dollars a pound.

Hits Foreign Labor

At all of these points the audience smiled approval although it was evident from the quazi-technical terms employed, that many of them were at a loss as to what it all meant.

The speaker then spoke briefly on the price of meat, declaring that Argentine workers being paid twenty-five cents a week, were responsible for low meat prices in this country.

Explains "Evils"

In explanation of these alleged evils the union executive declared that the root of all evil lay with the banks and bankers who controlled "the price of everything."

At this point he went tecnnical again and showed by questionable mathematics, how one dollar was made to blossom into five or ten in the banker's pockets. Here he broadly intimated that the U. S. Government was not totally ignorant of these doings and that the Congressmen were owned by "Wall Street."

To further illustrate his point, he read a "letter sent the bankers of this country in 1862 by the Bank of England." In this communication he said, English bankers counseled the local "money chargers" to free the negroes and save a few dollars which might be spent on them for medical attention.

By controlling the workers, he quoted, American bankers could realize a greater margin of profit than by keeping them as slaves.

Includes Newspapers

The "ever-malicious" press came in for a sound drubbing. Here Mr. Irby reiterated the non-too-original charge that the banks bought over the newspapers by placing advertisements in them. In this way, he explained, the people were denied the true facts. He said that the newspapers refused to tell the people how the bankers would rent a ten-dollar bill from the government for seven cents, and realize forty in re-investment.

The speaker then explained without proof, how, in Walker County, Alabama, the farmer union had made possible the hoisting of farm prices.

The same thing could be accomplished here, he declared, if neighbor would meet neighbor and co-operate in the manner advocated by the union. The price of cotton and other commodities can be hoisted as soon as enough farmers are "signed up" to control the market, he declared.

Here he told the crowd that the American Federation of Labor would do all in its power to co-operate with the organization.

Audience Approves

At frequent intervals a half-dozen on the small plat-form would clap or stomp their approval of the argument. In sharp contrast, the small fringe of white curiosity-seekers stood by laughing and talking.

The indifference of some, however, was replaced by expressed indignation when Irby, at the conclusion of his talk, shook hands with several negroes near the platform. Five or six whites approached him and told him in no uncertain terms that such doings were out of place in Opelousas and that it would be "healthier for him" if he let the negroes alone here.

Irby Is Advised

Several of the whites walked up to the ex-Congressman and called him an "agitator" seeking to stir up racial trouble here. One old farmer counseled him to leave "the negroes alone here because they're being treated right."

Another farmer asked the speaker what part the union had played in the recent Resettlement Administration agitation near Opelousas. To this he replied that the union was letting the government take its own course and that it had not interfered in any respect.

Labeled Communist

As Irby talked with several bystanders he spied Lee Roy Manuel, editor of the Opelousas Herald which recently took issue with the union.

He approached Manuel and expressed his delight at seeing him here. The newspaperman then asked Mr. Irby where he, as a newspaper employee "could get some of this money the banks were dishing out" for news suppression. Irby smiled apologetically. When asked if his union didn't have "communistic tendencies," he evaded the issue.

Meanwhile, a negro, who apparently had taken the talk too seriously, horned in a huddle of whites. For safety's sake, Willie Moreau, deputy, escorted the reluctant negro to the parish jail where he was lodged for a while "to cool off."

Riots - 1936

Missouri.

TOWN IS HEAVILY GUARDED

MACON, Mo.. — A race riot was put down in this north-central Missouri town, 170 miles from St. Louis Saturday night after a white policeman was slain and six other persons were wounded, five of them colored. Only the quick intervention of a highway patrolman with a sub-machine gun followed by rapid action of county authorities in obtaining reinforcement from the state highway patrol were believed to have prevented much bloodshed and lynchings. The jail where twenty colored prisoners were held was under heavy guard.

Preparations to meet an emergency began when reports reached authorities that persons on the streets were talking about organizing a "necktie party."

The outbreak occurred early Sunday in front of a place operated by Ernest Finney. Claude Whiles, 39 year old white, ex-service man appointed a special policeman only 30 days ago, was wounded fatally when he went to the aid of Charles Fower, white, aviator and filling station operator.

Raid Had Been Considered

Fower said he had been assaulted by two men as he passed Finney's place.

Finney shot Whiles. Ora Dunham, an employe working at Fower's station, ran to the scene with a shotgun, giving it to Fower. Fower shot Finney, inflicting two wounds.

Lawrence Hurst a painter, suffered a slight wound when struck by a stray shot. Fower was unscathed.

Whiles was taken to Samaritan hospital, where he died at 12:05 a. m., Monday. Before his death Whiles made a statement in presence of Mayor Shale, Prosecutor Duval and Douglas Dunlap, a fireman, in which the officer stated Finney shot him.

The prosecutor said first degree murder charges would be filed against Finney. The accused man was being held in the county jail. His condition was not considered serious, officers said.

Material Witnesses Held

Held in jail with Finney as material witnesses were Blanch Charles, Lois Welch and Elbert Hicks and wife, who Prosecutor Duval said were with Herbert Hicks and Leon Jackson when the two allegedly assaulted Fower.

Fower credited Victor Kelso, state trooper, with quelling the Sunday morning outbreak. Appearing on the scene in answer to a riot call, armed with a sub machine gun, Kelso walked into the mob.

A Coroner's jury returned a homicide verdict in While's death, and recommended that Finney be held without bail.

NEW YORK SUN

FEB 3 1936

One Killed in Clash Of Races in Missouri

MACON, Mo., Feb. 3 (A. P.).—The police force was doubled here today after a clash between white and Negro residents in which a special officer was wounded fatally and seven other persons hurt.

Claude Whiles, special policeman, died early today from bullet wounds suffered in a disturbance Saturday night at a Negro club. Lewis A. Duval, prosecuting attorney, said Whiles had accused Ernest Finney, Negro club operator, of shooting him.

Finney, himself wounded, was under arrest, along with twenty-three other Negroes, including two women.

10 INNOCENT NEGROES HURT IN NEAR RIOT

Ernest Finney and Others Arrested in Macon, Mo., Disturbance

MACON, Mo.—At least 10 innocent Negroes were wounded by stray bullets fired during a disturbance which threatened to develop into a race riot here Sunday night, February 2.

They were Geneva Guy, Richard Bethel, Marylene Harris, Torrice McNutt, Geneva Hicks, Blanche Charles, Leon Jackson, Wade Jackson, Waldo Hicks and Elbert Hicks. Several whites also were injured.

Ernest Finney, owner of the restaurant where the disturbance began, was arrested as the slayer of Claude Whiles, special police officer who was fatally wounded in the encounter. Finney also was wounded but not seriously. He will be charged with murder.

Order Customers Out

Following some trouble within the restaurant, Finney and his wife ordered the customers out of their place. As the crowd left the place, many stood on the outside and looked through the window as Finney tried to clear his business establishment. It was believed that Finney had expected his place to be raided.

On the outside in the crowd stood Charles Fower, white, who operates a battery station near Finney's restaurant. An argument developed between Fower and two Negro women. In defense of the women, Herbert Hicks and Leon Jackson entered the argument with Fower and a fight began.

According to the story told police, when Wade Jackson, father of Leon Jackson, joined the fight, Fower called for Whiles who was nearby to aid him. As Whiles arrived at the scene of the encounter, Finney came out of his restaurant with a gun in his hand and shot Whiles, according to the police report.

Fower Shoots Finney

Whiles then fired several shots at Finney. As Whiles ran from the scene, Fower ran to his battery shop, obtained his sawed-off shotgun and shot Finney. They exchanged shots

About that time, more officers and state patrolmen arrived on the scene and arrested Finney.

In the meantime, Fower had sent a friend, Orrie Dunham, to obtain more guns for him and as the officers were arresting Finney, Dunham appeared with three shotguns and a rifle, prepared to continue the attack on the Negroes.

Among those arrested and taken to jail with Finney, who was not wounded seriously, were Blanche Charles, Lois Welch, Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Hicks

Riots-1936

New York.

Unrest Grips Harlem Section After Attack

Many Injured As Police Swing Clubs at Street Meeting

Reserve policemen from virtually every station in Manhattan patrolled Harlem yesterday, as the largest Negro community in the world was in the grip of unrest.

Seething in poverty, the prey of landlords, Tammany politicians, guarded by police like people of a conquered territory, the suppressed Negroes of Harlem defended themselves against police who broke up a meeting late Sunday night on Lenox Avenue, between 126th and 127th Streets.

After police provoked an audience of more than 400 who had gathered around a nationalist speaker, stones were thrown through a window of a restaurant and a door of a haberdashery store was smashed.

A charge that the meeting in front of the restaurant at 329 Lenox Avenue was staged in an attempt to extort money from the owners, Rocco Caiadullo and Angelo Ruffalo was pressed before the Grand Jury yesterday against Carlos Cooks, 20, the speaker.

Brutal Attack

It could not be learned how many Negroes were injured in the police attack, but spectators said they swung their clubs and cracked heads wherever they saw them.

Between 10 and 11 p.m. on Sunday night a Daily Worker reporter walked through Harlem from 110th Street and Seventh Avenue to 145th Street.

On every block there was one or more policemen. Mounted police stood guard every four blocks.

Four Garveyite meetings were held: one at 115th Street and Lenox Avenue; one at 127th Street and Lenox Avenue; one at 130th Street and Lenox Avenue; one at 139th Street and Lenox Avenue.

Negro speakers, dressed in black shirts, with the national flag flying over them, told their audiences that they would soon be driven out of their poverty-stricken quarters, if they did not rise up and fight their oppressors.

The crowd at 127th Street met in front of an Italian restaurant. Bitter against the police and against Mussolini, the Italian restaurant became the focal point of a fight between Negroes and police. A policeman was reported to have been cut while attacking a Negro.

Strive to Weld Unity

A dangerous situation exists in Harlem today. The suppression of the Mayor's report has added weight to the arguments of those who believe that the solution for the Negro is war against all white people.

Three Dead in Two Nights of Race Rioting

Italians, Chinese, Puerto Ricans, Colored, All in Affrays.

EVEN MAYOR GETS JOSTLED IN MOB

Policeman, 2 Others Reported Slain.

NEW YORK—Three people, including a patrolman were slain and scores of citizens were injured in spasmodic fights that broke out in Harlem Sunday and Monday nights, nearly approaching a riot, resulting from racial clashes.

Hundreds of policemen took part in the affrays in which nearly five racial roups and nationalities participated.

Chinese and Puerto Ricans

The first outbreak came early Sunday between Puerto Ricans and Chinese in a restaurant at 90 Lenox Avenue. Police give different versions of the clash in which Emilio Diaz, a Puerto Rican was slashed to death with a cleaver.

One version was that the Puerto Rican, in a jealous rage over a white woman, attacked the Chinese waiter, and about 25 went to the rescue of their countryman. Another report said that Diaz went crazy with the heat. Nelson Wong is being held for murder.

A more serious outbreak, which brought nearly 400 patrolmen, began about midnight Sunday when an unknown Italian is alleged to have hurled a bottle at a step ladder speaker who was denouncing Mussolini at a street corner meeting.

The gesture was a signal for the crowd of auditors to start an attack on the restaurant of Rocco Ciadullo at 329 Lenox Avenue.

Patrolman Daniel Dolan, who was stabbed in the malee, died in the Sydenham Hospital Tuesday after several blood transfusions failed. Patrolman Alexander Morgan, a mounted policeman, was felled with a brick as the mob went on a window breaking raid on Italian establishments that lasted for nearly four hours before police quieted things down.

The second series of attacks came Monday night when Ashton Walker, 21, of 163 West 143rd Street, was shot in a restaurant at 244 E. Seventh Avenue, and another mob had to be dispersed.

Another affray resulted in the death of Raymond Lopez, who was riddled with bullets at 164 West 11*th Street, allegedly by Bernice Saunders, 33, 321 West 121st Street.

Mayor Present

During the confusion that followed Mayor LaGuardia, who was passing through Harlem at the time, was attracted by the crowd and more than 100 policemen, who were milling about the scene. The mayor, who was unrecognized, was jostled during the disturbance.

HARLEM TENSE AS RESULT OF POLICE ARMY., ATTACKS ON MEETINGS; EXPLOSION FEARED

NEW YORK, July -- (CNA)- Harlem took on the appearance of occupied enemy territory this week as police reinforcements were rushed into the largest Negro community in the world following fighting Monday night between citizens and the police when the latter attacked an anti-fascist meeting at which speakers called for the defense of Ethiopia and boycott of Italian-made goods.

The already large police forces in the community, to which Harlem leaders have repeatedly objected as out of all proportion and constituting a provocation against the poople of Harlem, were increased by 250 patrolmen from non-Harlem police precincts. Police are met with in twos and threes on practically every Harlem block, while squads of mounted police have been placed at intervals of every four blocks.

Mayor Is Warned

With tension in the community rapidly increasing, Harlem leaders this week warned the Mayor again that a dangerous situation exists in Harlem as a result of the police occupation and attacks on citizens and the ignoring by Mayor La Guardia of the recommendations made by his own Commission on Harlem Conditions of measures for correction of bad housing, inadequate hospitalization, lack of playgrounds and other discriminatory conditions. Members of the Commission have told the Mayor bluntly that these conditions cannot be corrected by increasing police terror against Harlemites.

In a bitter attack on the suppression of the Commission's report by the Mayor, James W. Ford, Communist candidate for Vice President of the United States, demanded that Mayor La Guardia "stop stalling" on the question of carrying out the Commission's recommendations.

Declaring that discrimination against Negroes on jobs, both municipal and private, as revealed in the Commission's report, continue, Ford demanded immediate remedial action. He also assailed the Mayor for his failure to provide playgrounds and swimming pools for Harlem children.

"During these days thousands of the poor little kids have no place to get

shelter from the terrible heat," Ford pointed out. "The children are sweltering in the streets. Every section of the city has made some improvements in child recreation, insufficient though they are, but in Harlem, where improvement is needed most, little action has been taken by the city."

Worms Turn

Treated like people of a conquered territory and subjected for several months past to unpunished police assaults, the patience of the community broke when police launched an attack on an audience of 400 persons who had gathered around a nationalist speaker on Lenox Avenue between 126th and 127th Streets.

A shower of stones and other missiles was released on the police from the roofs of neighboring houses. The windows of an Italian-owned restaurant and several other stores were smashed. On the streets numerous scuffles took place between police and citizens rallying to the defense of the pro-Ethiopian meeting. Three policemen were reported to have been seriously injured, while scores of citizens were ruthlessly clubbed on the heads and bodies by the police.

Carlos Cook, 20, arrested as the organizer of the meeting attacked by the police was held in $500 bail when the proprietors of the damaged Italian restaurant, after discussion with the police, brought a surprise charge of extortion against Cook. Fully 24 hours after Cook's arrest, Rocco Caiadullo and Angelo Ruffalo, owners of the restaurant, discovered that the meeting was held in front of their restaurant in an attempt to extort money from them as a bribe to holding the meeting elsewhere. Cook indignantly denied the charge.

Greenwood, S. C. Index-Journal
July 16, 1936

UNUSUAL DOWN HERE

For the second time within two months,—note that "two months"—New York City has had a race riot of first degree importance. The latest clash between whites and blacks was in Harlem and grew out of the Ethiopian war issue; Italians on one side and colored residents on the other. The other was an aftermath of the Louis-Schmeling prize fight.

Here are two paragraphs from The Times of New York giving the lead-details of the riot:

> More than two hundred and fifty extra policemen were patroling the streets of Harlem last night and early this morning following an anti-Italian outbreak in which three patrolmen were injured, one of them seriously, as a mob of four hundred Negroes hurled bricks, bottles and stones through the windows of a restaurant owned by Italians.
>
> The four hundred Negroes had gathered in front of the store about 11 p. m., while street speakers assailed the Italian conquest of Ethiopia and incited Negro residents of Harlem to rise against Italian storekeepers in the area. As the clash started, several Negroes and white men were assaulted as they came out of the restaurant, which had a separate barroom. Missiles shattered the glass in three windows.

In any Southern city a riot of this size would have been blazoned with streamers and box car type in all Northern and Eastern papers. As it was this story was found on the market page of the second section of The Times.

The truth of the matter is that no such riots are going to break out in the South as conditions now obtain. There is no excitement anywhere down here over Italy and Ethiopia.

The New York incident may be worth notice as showing what can happen.